

REMARKS

Claims 1-47 are pending. Claims 29-47 are rejected.

Claims 48-67 were added in the August 18, 2004 Amendment.

Claims 68-80 are new. Claims 1-28 and 30 had been canceled without prejudice. Claims 29, 51, and 54 are canceled without prejudice in this Amendment. Dependent claims 31-47 now depend from amended claim 48.

Claims 48 and 67 are amended to recite cooperative binding and to clarify the structural relationship of the components. New claims 68-80 recite particular embodiments of various components. The amendments and new claims are fully supported in the application as originally filed at least at page 17, lines 7-10 and 15-21; page 19, lines 11-24; page 20, lines 1-20; Tables 1-4; and Figure 1. Applicants respectfully assert that no new matter has been added.

STATEMENT OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW

Applicants thank Examiner Jones for the courtesy of a personal interview on September 9, 2004 with their undersigned representative.

As required, applicants state that the substance of the interview was the Office Action mailed May 4, 2004, and applicants' Amendment in response filed on August 18, 2004.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 29, 31, 32, 35, 36, 38-42, and 45-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Garrity.

Applicants believe the Examiner indicated during the September 9, 2004 interview that Garrity was overcome. If applicants have misunderstood, applicants again assert at least that the Examiner has not indicated where Garrity teaches, suggests, or motivates providing a patient with an assembly where the binding regions relatively self-adjust to form a composition with cooperative binding, and respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn.

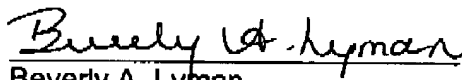
CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, applicant's invention is believed to be patentable and an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes that no fee is due. If fees are necessary, the Commissioner may consider this to be a request for such and charge them to Deposit Account No. 23-3000.

The Examiner is invited to contact the applicants' undersigned representative with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
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